

REMARKS

The Office Action dated January 29, 2008, and made final, has been carefully reviewed and the foregoing amendment has been made in consequence thereof.

Claims 1, 3-32, and 49-55 are now pending in this application. Claims 1-32 and 49-52 stand rejected. Claim 2 has been canceled.

The rejection of Claim 55 under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description is respectfully traversed. In particular, the Office Action asserts that the feature “converting the unenrolled player account into an enrolled player account” is not supported by the original disclosure. Applicants respectfully disagree. For example, paragraph [0055] of Applicants’ specification recites “enrollment can be made in any of the manners discussed with respect to FIG. 3.” Thus, as shown in figure 3, at step 320, an unenrolled player is identified, and at step 380, the unenrolled player is enrolled, thus converting the unenrolled player to an enrolled player. Furthermore, paragraphs [0043]-[0054], for example, describe an unenrolled player having a temporary account, an uncarded player account, or an unenrolled player account that will be consider (“converted”) as an enrolled account, after the unenrolled player is enrolled. Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that Claim 55 satisfies the requirements of Section 112. As such, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 55 under 35 U.S.C. §112.

The rejection of Claims 1, 3-32, and 53-55 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Publication No. 2004/0002386 to Wolfe, et al. (hereinafter referred to as “Wolfe”) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,371,852 to Acres (hereinafter referred to as “Acres”) is respectfully traversed.

Wolfe describes a casino information management system that includes a casino server (20) and a plurality of hand-held devices (12) connected to the casino server (20) by a wireless communication system (13). A casino employee may use a hand-held device (12) to coordinate drop box processing, receive and place beverage orders from players, facilitate

communications between multiple players, and coordinate jackpot processing. Moreover, the employee may use the hand-held device (12) to obtain information from the casino server (20) about a particular gaming machine or a group of gaming machines, or about a particular player or a group of players. For example, an employee may locate players that have wagered more than a specified amount of money within a certain time period. If such a player does not have a player account for a player tracking service, the employee may register the player using the hand-held device (12). Notably, as acknowledged by the Examiner on page 3 of the Office Action, Wolfe does not describe nor suggest enrollment incentives.

Acres describes a method in which account credits may be applied to a player's account, as an incentive to the player to open the account. In other words, when the account is opened by a casino, an account credit, e.g., \$5, may be applied to the account. Moreover, Acres describes inducing a player to use a tracking card by awarding each player points that are proportional to money wagered by the player. Players consequently accrue points at a rate related to an amount wagered. The points are displayed on display 58. The player may then redeem points for selected merchandise, meals in casino restaurants, or the like, which each have assigned point values. Notably, Acres does not describe nor suggest presenting an unenrolled player with incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if enrolled in the player tracking system.

Claim 1 recites a method of registering an unenrolled player in a player tracking system, wherein the method comprises “permitting the unenrolled player to play a gaming device using an unenrolled player account . . . detecting a triggering event . . . notifying the unenrolled player after the occurrence of the triggering event . . . presenting the unenrolled player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if enrolled in the player tracking system . . . allowing the unenrolled player to enroll in the player tracking system in response to the notification . . . awarding the unenrolled player the enrollment incentives after enrolling in response to the notification.”

No combination of Wolfe and Acres describes nor suggests a method of registering an unenrolled player in a player tracking system, as is recited in Claim 1. More specifically, no combination of Wolfe and Acres describes nor suggests presenting an unenrolled player with

enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if enrolled in a player tracking system. Rather, and as acknowledged by the Examiner, Wolfe does not describe nor suggest enrollment incentives, and Acres describes applying credits to a player's account as an incentive to open the account. In contrast, Claim 1 induces an unenrolled player into becoming an enrolled player by presenting the unenrolled player with incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if the unenrolled player was an enrolled player, unlike Acres who merely applies credits to a player's account as an incentive to open the account.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres.

Claims 3-32 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 3-32 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 3-32 likewise are patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres.

Claim 49 recites a player tracking system for uncarded players, comprising “means for tracking uncarded play by uncarded players having uncarded player accounts . . . a memory for storing the tracked uncarded play . . . means for detecting the occurrence of a triggering event . . . means for notifying the uncarded players after the occurrence of the triggering event . . . means for presenting the unenrolled player with enrollment incentives the unenrolled player would have earned if enrolled in the player tracking system . . . means for awarding the enrollment incentives after enrolling in the player tracking system.”

No combination of Wolfe and Acres describes nor suggests a player tracking system for uncarded players, as is recited in Claim 49. More specifically, no combination of Wolfe and Acres describes nor suggests a means for presenting an unenrolled player with enrollment incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if enrolled in a player tracking system. Rather, and as acknowledged by the Examiner, Wolfe does not describe nor suggest enrollment incentives, and Acres describes applying credits to a player's account as an incentive to open the account. In contrast, Claim 49 induces an unenrolled player into becoming an enrolled player by presenting the unenrolled player with incentives that the

unenrolled player would have earned if the unenrolled player was an enrolled player, unlike Acres who merely applies credits to a player's account as an incentive to open the account.

Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 49 is submitted to be patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres.

Claims 50-52 depend from independent Claim 49. When the recitations of Claims 50-52 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 49, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 50-52 likewise are patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 1, 3-32, and 53-55 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 11-16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolfe in view of Acres, further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0127284 to Walker, et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Walker") is respectfully traversed.

Wolfe and Acres are described above. Walker describes a system (100) that includes one or more controllers (102) coupled in communication with one or more game machines (104). The system (100) enables messages to be sent between a controller (102) and a game machine (104), from one game machine (104) to another game machine (104), and/or from a game machine (104) or controller (102) to another device, such as a large display screen. Messages may include, for example, status messages, gaming-related messages, messages relating to comps or a player's casino visit, and/or news alerts. Moreover, messages may be categorized based on criteria such as a type of message, message content, an originator of a message, and/or a length of a message. Notably, Walker does not describe nor suggest presenting an unenrolled player with incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if the unenrolled player was an enrolled player.

No combination of Wolfe, Acres, and Walker describes nor suggests a method of registering an unenrolled player in a player tracking system, as is recited in Claim 1. More specifically, no combination of Wolfe, Acres, and Walker describes nor suggests permitting an unenrolled player to play a gaming device using an unenrolled player account. Rather,

and as acknowledged by the Examiner, Wolfe does not describe nor suggest enrollment incentives, Acres describes applying credits to a player's account as an incentive to open the account, and Walker merely describes a casino communication system that enables game machines, controllers, and/or other devices to send and display messages to players. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres, further in view of Walker.

Claims 11-16 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 11-16 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 11-16 likewise are patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres, further in view of Walker.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 11-16 be withdrawn.

The rejection of Claims 17-22 and 25-32 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Wolfe in view of Acres, further in view of U.S. Patent 6,896,618 to Benoy, et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Benoy") is respectfully traversed.

Wolfe and Acres are described above. Benoy describes a player tracking system that includes a player tracking account server (60) that collects player data from a player tracking unit (56) within each of a plurality of gaming devices (90, 92, 94, 96). Each player tracking unit (56) includes a card reader (24), a speaker and microphone (58), and a touch screen display (16). The player tracking unit (56) may be used to login to the player tracking system as an existing player and/or to enroll in the player tracking system as a new player before, during, or after the player plays a game at a gaming device (90, 92, 94, 96). Notably, Benoy does not describe nor suggest presenting the unenrolled player with incentives that the unenrolled player would have earned if the unenrolled player was an enrolled player.

No combination of Wolfe, Acres, and Benoy, describes nor suggests a method of registering an unenrolled player in a player tracking system, as is recited in Claim 1. More specifically, no combination of Wolfe, Acres, and Benoy describes nor suggests permitting

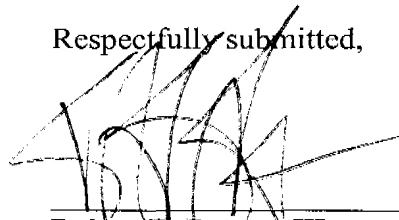
an unenrolled player to play a gaming device using an unenrolled player account. Rather, and as acknowledged by the Examiner, Wolfe does not describe nor suggest enrollment incentives, Acres describes applying credits to a player's account as an incentive to open the account, and Benoy merely describes a player tracking unit within a gaming machine that enables a player to login to a player tracking system as an existing player and/or enables the player to register as a new player with the player tracking system. Accordingly, for at least the reasons set forth above, Claim 1 is submitted to be patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres, further in view of Benoy.

Claims 17-22 and 25-32 depend from independent Claim 1. When the recitations of Claims 17-22 and 25-32 are considered in combination with the recitations of Claim 1, Applicants submit that dependent Claims 17-22 and 25-32 likewise are patentable over Wolfe in view of Acres, further in view of Benoy.

For at least the reasons set forth above, Applicants respectfully request that the Section 103 rejection of Claims 17-22 and 25-32 be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing amendment and remarks, all the claims now active in this application are believed to be in condition for allowance. Reconsideration and favorable action is respectfully solicited.

Respectfully submitted,



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